



NEW “BOBWHITE BUFFERS” CAN INCREASE FARM INCOME AND QUAIL

A new Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup practice is available that offers great incentives to cropland farmers and can restore critical habitat for bobwhite quail and other farm wildlife. With the CP-33 Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds, farmers can establish 30’ to 120’ wide native vegetation buffers along one or more crop field borders under a 10-year contract. Attractive features of this conservation practice include:

- No competitive ranking – practice is automatically accepted if land meets eligibility criteria and practice guidelines.
- Enroll the least productive areas of your crop fields – edges where trees or other vegetation compete with crops for moisture and nutrients.
- Buffer one, two, or all sides of your fields. Leave out sides you need to continue cropping or use for field roads or turn rows.
- Straighten out irregular field edges.

Payments for CP-33 include:

- Signing Incentive Payment of up to \$100 per acre.
- Annual rental payments and maintenance costs. Producers will receive annual rental payments for the length of the contract (10 years). The payment is a weighted average of the county specific rental rate for comparable land, plus \$5 per year for standard practice maintenance.
- A Practice Incentive Payment of up to 40% of the eligible establishment costs.
- Cost-share assistance of up to 50% for mid-contract management practice options, which include strip-disking, prescribed burning, strip-herbicide, and legume interseeding.
- An additional one-time \$50 per acre is being offered by Quail Unlimited in the middle Tennessee counties of Coffee, Franklin, Lincoln, Giles, Marshall, Maury, Sumner, Robertson, Montgomery, and Stewart. Funds are limited, and awarded on a first-come first-served basis.

CP-33 buffers will be established to native grasses such as switchgrass, big and little bluestem, and indiangrass, along with native legumes including partridge pea and Illinois bundleflower. Slopes of less than 2% can be sown to kobe and Korean lespedeza and allowed to naturally revegetate. Up to 10% of the buffer can be established to native shrubs, if desired.

Signup for the practice will run on a continuous basis until the state’s allotment of 9,300 acres have been enrolled or December 31, 2007, whichever comes first. Application can be made at your local USDA Service Center. Additional information can also be obtained from the following NRCS Biologists: West Tennessee-Mike Hansbrough at (731)668-0700, Extension 112; Middle Tennessee-Chris Wolkonowski at (615)893-9295, Extension 112; East Tennessee-

Robin Mayberry at (865)523-3338, Extension 113, your local TWRA regional small game biologist, or TWRA Private Lands biologist Mark Gudlin at 615-781-6614.

Our State Game Bird, the bobwhite quail, has long been a valuable wildlife resource throughout the Tennessee landscape. Unfortunately, the call of the bobwhite is a sound that is not heard as often today because quail numbers have dropped considerably over the last 30 years. Quail biologists, research institutions, and even quail hunters have come to realize that many factors are at work that makes much the landscape unsuitable for quail. Clean farming practices, urban sprawl, the introduction of cool season grasses such as fescue, and even predation have all led to this precipitous decline in quail numbers. However, biologists across the Southeast have found that by improving the existing habitat conditions on a given farm, quail numbers can respond rapidly if given the chance. Establishing CP-33 buffers can provide critical nesting, brood-rearing, and protective cover on your farm and help play a role in restoring populations of quail, rabbits, songbirds, and other farm wildlife. Sign up today!